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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 001030

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/11/2013

TAGS: PREL IT LY UNSC

SUBJECT: LIBYA/UNSC: ITALY CONTINUES TO INTERVENE WITH LIBYA; VAGUE ANSWERS FROM LIBYA

REF: A. ROME 495

1B. ROME 277

1C. 02 SECSTATE 241030

CLASSIFIED BY: POL MC THOMAS COUNTRYMAN FOR REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D)

11. (U) THIS IS AN ACTION REQUEST. PLEASE SEE PARAGRAPH 6.

12. (C) SUMMARY: DESPITE VAGUE LIBYAN ANSWERS TO ROME'S REQUESTS THAT TRIPOLI FORGO OR AT LEAST POSTPONE ITS CANDIDACY FOR THE UNSC, SENIOR MFA OFFICIALS SEEM CONVINCED THAT LIBYA REMAINS SET ON PURSUING ITS UNSC CANDIDACY. POL MC URGED THE MFA TO CONTINUE ITS EFFORTS TO DISCOURAGE LIBYA FROM PURSUING ITS CANDIDACY. POL MC ALSO URGED THE MFA TO USE ANY INFLUENCE IT MAY HAVE ON AFRICAN COUNTRIES TO PREVENT THE LIBYANS FROM PURSUING THEIR UNSC CANDIDACY. HE INFORMALLY RAISED THE IDEA OF WHETHER A FRANCO-ITALIAN EFFORT ON THIS ISSUE COULD BEAR FRUIT. END SUMMARY.

13. (C) ON MARCH 10, POL MC AND NEA WATCHER MET MINISTER EUGENIO D'AURIA AND ANTONIO BELLAVIA, ASSISTANT TO THE MFA DG'S FOR NEA AND LIBYA OFFICE DIRECTOR, RESPECTIVELY. WHEN ASKED ABOUT ITALY'S MOST RECENT EFFORTS TO DISSUADE LIBYA FROM PURSUING A UNSC SEAT, D'AURIA SAID THAT AMBASSADOR ANTONIO BADINI, THE MFA'S DG FOR NEA, RAISED U.S. CONCERNS WITH THE LIBYAN DEPUTY FM WHILE ON AN OFFICIAL TRIP TO TRIPOLI FEB. 20. LIBYA'S RESPONSE ON ITS UNSC CANDIDACY WAS VAGUE, SAID D'AURIA, JUST LIKE THE LIBYAN FM'S RESPONSE WAS VAGUE WHEN FM FRATTINI DISCUSSED THE SAME MATTER WITH HIM IN ROME FEB. 5 (REF A.) THIS SAID, D'AURIA PREDICTED THAT LIBYA REMAINED SET ON PURSUING ITS UNSC CANDIDACY. (NOTE: IN A SEPARATE MEETING, BISOGNERO, THE MFA'S DEPUTY POLITICAL DIRECTOR, SHARED THE SAME IMPRESSION WITH POL MC. END NOTE.)

14. (C) LIBYA, PREDICTED D'AURIA, WOULD FOLLOW THE SAME APPROACH IN OBTAINING A UNSC NOMINATION AS IT DID IN SECURING A NOMINATION FOR THE UNCHR: GET THE FULL SUPPORT OF AF COUNTRIES FIRST, AND THEN SEEK WIDER SUPPORT. POL MC URGED THE GOI TO USE ANY INFLUENCE IT MAY HAVE WITH AF COUNTRIES TO DISSUADE LIBYA FROM PURSUING A UNSC CANDIDACY. D'AURIA REPLIED THAT ITALY HAS STRONG RELATIONS WITH MANY AF COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY ETHIOPIA, ERITREA, AND ANGOLA, AND WILL CONSIDER THE EFFECT APPROACHING THESE COUNTRIES MAY HAVE ON THE OUTCOME.

15. (C) POL MC INFORMALLY RAISED THE IDEA OF WHETHER AN ITALIAN COLLABORATION WITH FRANCE, WHICH HAS STRONG RELATIONS WITH LIBYA AND SEVERAL AFRICAN COUNTRIES, COULD PROVE FRUITFUL IN PREVENTING LIBYA FROM PURSUING A UNSC CANDIDACY. D'AURIA SAID HE WOULD "DISCREETLY" DISCUSS SUCH A POSSIBILITY WITH HIS FRENCH COUNTERPART IN THEIR NEXT MEETING IN BRUSSELS.

16. (C) EMBASSY SEEKS DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE ON RESPONDING TO ITALIAN OFFICIALS WHO ARE NOW INQUIRING IF THE REPORTED SUCCESS OF THE MARCH 11 TRILATERAL MEETING WILL CHANGE ANY THE USG POSITION ON LIBYA'S UNSC CANDIDACY.

SEMBLER

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